

No retreating by Jancys-Blue-Bayou

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Summary: "Nancy?" "Yeah?" He says her name so softly. She quietly answers as she looks up from his hand but don't move her fingers from where they're gracing his. Then he leans in and suddenly his soft lips are pressed against hers. She tightens her grip of his hand and melts into him. "Sorry..." For some reason he apologizes when their lips finally breaks apart. She can't fathom why when

No retreating

A/N: Okay so I didn't have anything planned for the first day of Jancy fic week, couldn't think of any take on the theme "Firsts" I hadn't already done so I kind of shoehorn this in here, "Firsts" isn't really the theme of the fic but it has a bunch of firsts in it at least. It's based on an AU idea I've had forever where Steve doesn't have his heel-face turn during s1 (which was hastily written in when the Duffers realized they liked Joe so much they wanted to keep him around) where he abruptly stops being a jerkass and goes to the Byers house in 1x08 to apologize. So he doesn't interrupt Jonathan and Nancy's moment on the couch, and they fight the Demogorgon alone, and their relationship develops differently than canon. It's also inspired by the "I waited" "For like a month" lines in s2 and a thought on what had happened if Nancy hadn't waited. Oh and also for a small part in it, the comic book that detailed Will's time in the Upside Down which revealed that he helped Jonathan save Nancy in the woods by the distracting the Demogorgon. I might continue this with more chapters of canon divergence.

"Nancy?"

"Yeah?"

He says her name so softly. She quietly answers as she looks up from his hand but don't move her fingers from where they're gracing his. Then he leans in and suddenly his soft lips are pressed against hers. She tightens her grip of his hand and melts into him.

"Sorry..."

For some reason he apologizes when their lips finally breaks apart. She can't fathom why when he after a week full of horror and grief and despair has just kissed her in a way that lets her know that there still is some good left in this world even when Barb is dead and monsters are real and boys will spy on you and call you a slut to the whole town.

"Don't be sorry," she tells him and leans in again for another kiss. It's

just as soft as the first one. Their first kiss. She knows she'll never forget her first or second kiss with Jonathan Byers.

"Woah..." he says the next time they break apart. His hand holds her firmer now, she notices.

"That was nice..." is all she can think to say.

"Yeah..."

"Jonathan I..." she pauses, considering her words. How do you tell someone that, despite all the hell that this week has been for her, she doesn't think it has been completely 100 % horrible because at least she's spent it getting to know him, for real, and that when this is all over, if they're still alive after tonight, she'd like to keep spending all her time with him?

Then the lights flicker and they both jolt and stands up and grab their weapons. It's time.

It's chaotic and intense and she can't quite believe it but their plan works. They wait for the monster with their backs against each other to cover every angle. When it bursts through the ceiling she kind of panics and instinctively starts to fire her gun at it. It does nothing except get it's attention even more. Jonathan has the presence of mind to grab her and pull her away with him and they run down the hall with the monster behind them, avoid the bear trap and into Will's room. They hear it outside and then the yo-yo moves and there's a roar as it gets caught in the trap. Jonathan is lightning fast to open the door and toss the lighter, igniting the monster. They watch in horror as it shrieks while burning. When the flames threaten to engulf the walls and roof Jonathan gets out the fire extinguisher. When the smoke clears the monster is gone, only bloody flesh remaining in the trap. It must be dead, right?

Then the lights turn on one by one and they follow them out to the porch. And Jonathan somehow knows it's his mom.

Three weeks. It's been three weeks since the worst and craziest week of her life. The week that irrevocably changed her life forever. She

dragged Barb to a party and while she was laying on Steve Harrington's bed telling herself that this is who she is while Steve and his wet jeans pressed against her Barb was grabbed and killed by a monster. She learned that monsters and other dimensions exists. She learned that Steve was the kind of guy who was jealous and possessive and who'd spy on her and slutshame her to the whole town because she had another boy in her room. She learned that her little brother found a superhero girl in the woods and then got to see him heartbroken when she disappeared.

But most of all she learnt about Jonathan Byers and about herself. She learnt that Jonathan wasn't the creep everyone said he was. Yes he'd stepped way over her boundaries when he took pictures of her. But he had sincerely apologized, looked more ashamed than she's ever seen anyone look, and never did anything like it again. Instead always respecting her boundaries. And saving her life. She learnt that Jonathan was insanely brave, and strong, and cunning and smart. That he loved his family more than anything in the world and would do anything for them. And she learnt that he was funny and kind and weirdly cute.

About herself she learned that maybe she was brave too. Maybe to a fault, there's a thin line between brave and stupid and in hindsight crawling through the tree portal without thinking it through was the latter. But she also learned that she was smart in more ways than just 'book smart' which she'd always been told she was, that she also was cunning and quick on her feet and could devise plans to catch monsters. And she learned that she was good with a gun. She also learned that she got butterflies in her stomach when Jonathan looked at her and smiled his crooked smile she'd never seen before, that she liked the way he smelled and that she'd never felt safer than when she was in his arms. And she learned that his kisses made her feel like everything was alright with the world even when it was not.

And she liked her new self. That's what it felt like, that she had discovered a new self. Or maybe just unlocked what was always there. She liked knowing she was brave and tough, that she was both the kind of girl who would slap a guy who called her a slut to the whole town and the kind of girl who could fight a monster.

But the three weeks since then she's felt like she's stuck in limbo.

That week she at least felt alive. She hasn't felt that since. Barb is dead. The crushing weight of that, and of knowing that but not being able to tell even Barb's parents, paralyzed her. She didn't feel like getting out of bed even, but forced herself to get up, to drag herself to school. Where no one would shut up. About how creepy Byers little brother got lost in the woods. About how Barb ran away. About how she is a slut with a thing for perverts.

And she can't stop thinking about Jonathan Byers or his kisses. And all those other things she learned about him and her that week.

The new Nancy wants to be with Jonathan. That's what she's arrived at now. Amidst all the grief and despair, she can't stop thinking about him. When she's crying herself to sleep over Barb she wishes she was back in his arms because that felt so good when she was crying after he saved her from the Upside Down. And she's felt lonelier than she's ever been during these three weeks, and the one moment she didn't feel alone was when during Jonathan's first day back in school she went to him to say hey and see how he was doing and he said he was alright and asked how she was. She'd lied then, said she was "okay after all" when she's really anything but, but still for a moment he looked up from staring at his shoes and their eyes locked and she felt like they both knew that... they had each other at least.

Ever since that day she's wished Jonathan would come up to her by her locker or maybe come to her house and ask what she was doing that day, if they could go somewhere just the two of them and talk and stuff. But he hasn't. He keeps his distance at school. She can't really blame him, the events of that week put a lot of attention on Jonathan and her, and Jonathan hates attention. She suspects he thinks she doesn't want to be seen with him at school, considering all the gossip after what Steve did. Maybe he thinks she doesn't want anything to do with him outside of that week. In spite of the life altering kisses. And he hasn't come by her house, he goes straight home or to work after the final bell. Which she understands. Plus, the reason he'd come by her house before was to drop Will off or pick him up but Will hasn't been over yet after everything. She knows he got home from the hospital just last week and hasn't been back to school yet.

So Jonathan is dealing with a lot. And either way he's shy. She's come

to realize that maybe she needs to do it. Take the first step. Tell him all the things she was going to tell him that night before the lights flickered. She thinks that if she's so brave and tough she shouldn't retreat from this, her feelings, any less than the monster she stood up to. So she borrows her mom's station wagon and drives to the outskirts of town.

"Nancy, sweetie!"

It's Joyce who opens the door. For a second she's not sure what to say, she had spent the whole car ride over going over in her head what she'd say to Jonathan she never thought about what to say to Joyce and whether this is even a good time, for gods sake Will almost died and they have a lot to deal with maybe they want privacy to deal with more important things than the fact that she wants to kiss Jonathan again and tell him she can't stop thinking about him.

"Hey, how are you? I hope this isn't a bad time..."

"No, not at all come on in, I'm good, how are you?" Joyce seems to be in a good mood and ushers her inside.

"You sure? I don't want to impose..."

"Sweetie you're not, how have you been? I never got a chance to thank you for everything you did."

"Oh, no need to thank me um... I'm good, I just came by to... um, is Jonathan home?"

"Oh yes, he's in his room, let me take your coat, you can just go right in he's going to be so happy to see you!"

Joyce takes her coat and smiles at her as she walks down the hallway she hasn't been in since she and Jonathan trapped a monster in a bear trap and set fire to it there. It looks much better now, the whole house does and she realizes how much work Jonathan must've put into put it back in order and she thinks she should've thought of that and been considerate enough to offer to help. It also hits her that she hasn't been in Jonathan's room before but in Will's, which is kind of weird. She knows which one is his though, and she can hear music

and two voices coming from inside of it when she stops by the door and knocks.

"Yeah?" Jonathan's voice coming from inside makes her both excited and nervous. She takes a deep breath and opens the door.

Will is sitting next to Jonathan on the bed and they both look surprised to see her.

"Nancy!" Jonathan quickly stands up and pauses the music and runs a hand through his hair all at once. He looks a bit caught out and his gaze wanders nervously around his room before returning to her. She's not sure why, his room looks... nice. Much tidier than she imagined it, in her limited experience boys bedrooms tend to be messy.

"Hey... I hope this isn't a bad time, your mom let me in..."

"No, no I just... hi."

"Hi," she smiles. "Hey Will, how are you feeling?" She turns to the boy on the bed.

"Hey Nancy. I'm better. I can go to school tomorrow," he smiles.

"That's great," she smiles and understands why Joyce was in such a good mood. "Mike's gonna be so happy."

Will smiles and excuses himself, on his way out turning to Jonathan and shooting him a look that she can't see but which makes Jonathan's cheeks flush and his eyes drop to the floor. Chester gets up off the bed and follows Will out the door, stopping briefly to be petted by her.

"So um, hey..."

"Hey," she says again. "So um, I just wanted to come by to um... see you again... um, how you were doing... and all."

"Oh! I'm good... I'm alright, how are you?"

"I'm okay. But... can we talk?"

"Yeah, yeah sure of course um can I get you anything do you want something to drink or...?"

"No, thanks I'm good. Can I sit down?"

"Of course, yes, sorry about the mess."

"What mess, your room's tidier than mine," she smiles as she sits down on his bed.

"Oh, right no I don't know why I said that," he hurriedly gets out. He's still standing, looking like she's an alien not a girl sitting on his bed. She realizes Jonathan Byers probably never has had a girl sit on his bed before and maybe that's why he's nervous. She's puzzled by how someone can be so nervous and yet so brave as he is. Not only in hunting monsters with her but also in that he had the courage to kiss her first that night.

"Can you sit down too?"

"Oh right, sorry," he excuses himself and quickly sits down on the bed again.

"It's alright. Um so I... wanted to talk to you about um..." she's not sure where to start. She can't just dive right in can she? She should check in with him first. "Well how have you been, like really? It must've been... a lot... after everything..."

"Oh yeah um... yeah it's been... a lot but it's better now. Um, Will's better which is the most important thing."

"Of course, I'm glad."

"And mom's doing better now that Will is too... the first week really was the worst. All the doctors and the government spooks making us sign stuff... at least Hopper was there and helped us out... we got some money, like hush money I guess... felt weird getting it but we needed it... used a lot to fix the house."

"Yeah, wow. We had to sign stuff too, the feds creeped me out. Mike wanted to fight them pretty much. But hey, the house looks great. Sorry I didn't come by earlier, I should've thought about it... could've

helped out, it must've been a lot of work."

"Oh no you didn't have to it's okay. It didn't take too long really, Hopper helped me out with that too."

"That's nice of him. Still, sorry I didn't."

"You didn't have to, it's alright."

"Okay."

There's a little lull in the conversation as she thinks about what to say next. She glances down at his hands that's resting over his knees.

"How's your hand?" She asks.

"Oh, it's okay," he says and flips it over to show the scarred palm. The large cut matches her own pretty closely. "How's yours?"

"It's okay," she parrots and shows off hers. Without thinking she reaches out and takes his left hand in her right and holds it closer to her left and studies the scars. She hears his breath hitch. "Mine's bigger," she can't help but note with a smirk.

"Congratulations," he replies and she looks up to see that crooked smile she's missed so much. She smiles back at him and doesn't let go of his hand.

"I've missed you," she tells him.

"I've missed you too," he answers. "I was gonna um... I don't know but um... I've been busy and um... sorry..."

"It's okay. I know. I understand, you've had a lot on your plate, with Will and your mom and work and the house... I should've come over sooner."

"It's alright... how are you doing then, really?"

"Um..." The way he softly asks the question and looks at her makes all her walls tumble down and she just lets it out. "Not good. Barb's dead and no one knows, not even her parents, and I miss her so much

and I can't sleep because I just keep seeing... her or that thing, that monster, in my dreams... and Mike is depressed and my parents are clueless, and everyone at school except you are horrible and I hate them and I feel so alone and I miss you so much like, so much, I can't stop thinking about you and..."

She quiets when Jonathan pulls her into his arms and hugs her. She wraps her arms around him and buries her face in his neck and breathes him in and just like the last time she feels safe. She's missed this so much. She can't be without this.

"I've missed you so much too. And I haven't stopped thinking about you either. I wish I'd talked to you at school or something but I was scared to, I didn't want to... I didn't know if you wanted to... be seen with me after everything and um... sorry."

"It's okay."

"And... you're not alone... um, I'm... I'm here," he tells her. She pulls herself in even closer at that. "I got you, I got you," he repeats the same words he did that night he saved her life in the woods and she feels like she needed to hear them just as badly now.

"Thank you."

"And I'm so sorry about Barb. If there's anything I can do to help you... I will."

"Thank you."

She pulls back a bit, so she's able to look at him but she doesn't let go of him and he doesn't let go of her which she's thankful for. She wipes away some tears.

"It's okay," he tells her.

"It is when I'm with you," she tells him. He smiles softly at that. "You remember that night, on the couch... when we waited for the monster?" She asks though it's a stupid question, of course he remembers.

"Of course... um... I haven't stopped thinking about that..." he

nervously admits.

"About kissing me?" She asks.

"Yes," he confirms and blushes.

"Me neither," she lets him know. "And um, there was something I wanted to tell you, that night, before the lights started blinking..."

"I remember..."

"So um... I wanted to tell you now..."

"Okay..."

"And what I want to tell you is that um... even though that week was like the worst week ever and it was absolute hell and Will almost died and Barb did I... I don't think it was all totally 100 % bad because... I spent it with you, and I got to get to know you... and I got to kiss you... um, and I was going to say that if we made it out alive that I'd like to keep spending my time with you, after that. Um. And I'd want to kiss you more and..."

He does it again. He kisses her again and his lips are just as soft as the first time and she melts into it just like the first time. She holds him closer this time though, and he sort of pulls her into his lap and they don't break apart for more than a split second to quickly take a breath before locking lips again.

"Wow..." she eventually gets out when they do take a break, her forehead resting against his.

"I wanted to tell you all those things too but I was too shy to..." he tells her.

"It's alright... kissing me was a good move too," she smiles. He chuckles.

"But um... so..."

"So..."

"Do you want to um... go out, sometime?" He asks her, seeming unsure of his words again somehow.

"Yes, I'd want to go out many times with you... because I want to be your girlfriend, Jonathan," she tells him. "I mean, if you want to be my boyfriend?" She quickly tacks on.

"Y-yes!" He hurriedly answers. "I don't know what I'm doing but..."

"Me either, and I think you're doing good..."

"Okay..."

She leans in and kisses him again. He eagerly responds to it, deepens it even. Then there's a knock on the door and before they can react it swings open and suddenly Joyce is standing there. She and Jonathan spring apart like they've just been burnt.

"Oh! Sorry! So sorry, I'm so sorry! I was just gonna ask if Nancy wanted to stay for dinner, I'm sorry!" Joyce hurries to apologize.

"Mom!" Jonathan calls out, cheeks completely crimson just like she figures hers must be.

"Sorry, I'm sorry I shouldn't have barged right in I didn't know you'd be... um, sorry!"

She tries to stifle a giggle, and she would've managed it but then Will appears in the doorway.

"Ew, they were kissing weren't they?" He says with all the disgust only a 12 year old boy can have in his voice.

And that does her in. She can't help it, she's mortified too about getting caught by Jonathan's mother, but something about it and Will's typical pre-teen boy reaction makes her giggle too. Maybe it's just nervous laughter.

"Sorry, sorry but it's okay," she gets out when she feels everyone look at her as she giggles while staring down at Jonathan's comforter.

"I'm still sorry I... interrupted. But um... is this... new... or...?" Joyce

asks.

"Um... kind of um..." she searches for the right words and looks to Jonathan. He meets her gaze and it's like they can speak without saying anything. She nods and he takes her hand and turns to his mom.

"Yes it's kind of new um, Nancy is... my girlfriend."

Jonathan blushes again saying those words, the words that sends butterflies to her stomach. She's Jonathan Byers girlfriend and really excited about it. Someone else is too.

"Oh that's wonderful," Joyce clasps her hands together and looks so happy. "I'm so happy for you two, you know I wonder if something was... oh this is so great! You'll stay for dinner sweetie, right?"

"I'd love to, if it's not too much trouble..." she answers, standing up.

"Oh it's no trouble at all, we're so happy to have you," Joyce comes over and hugs her.

"So does your parents know?" Joyce asks her over dinner.

"No, you're the first to know um... it's really new..."

"Like today new?" Will asks.

"Um... kind of um... we... so much has been going on we need some time to... figure stuff out and... yeah, but it kind of started um, during... that week, uh... you know," she awkwardly answers, wary of how sensitive a topic that is with Will and Joyce.

"I'm so happy something good came out of that week at least," Joyce smiles.

"Me too," she answers. Jonathan and Will nods.

"And... we're so sorry about Barbara," Joyce continues.

"Thank you," she nods. Will looks pensive for a moment and then blurts out:

"I saw you in the woods."

"What?" She and Jonathan says at once. Will looks caught out for a moment.

"Um... that night when you were in the woods... I saw you..."

"When I crawled through the tree?"

"Yes..."

"You were there?" Jonathan sounds shaken by the thought that his little brother was so close yet so far away then.

"Yeah... I heard your voices and then I saw you... and the monster and the portal. I knew you wouldn't make it in time but I wanted to help so I distracted it... the Demogorgon..."

"That's why it didn't grab me... you saved me..." the realization that she was saved by both Jonathan and Will shakes her.

"Jonathan saved you..."

"You did too... thank you... thank you Will."

"Yes thank you..." Jonathan repeats. "You're so brave Will... why didn't you go through the portal too...?" He continues with hesitation.

"I tried too... I wasn't fast enough, it closed..."

"My brave boy," Joyce puts an arm around her youngest son. "At least you're all okay now, that's what matters."

They all nod in agreement. Joyce moves them past the tense subject by asking her about school. Will excuses himself to go to the bathroom. When he gets back she hugs him and thanks him again.

She and Jonathan tries to do the washing up after dinner but Joyce insists she takes care of it. She thanks Joyce again for dinner and tells her how great the house looks and then Jonathan and she ends up on the living room couch watching tv with Will kicking back in the

loveseat. Chester comes up to her, curiously sniffs her hand and then jumps onto the couch and lays his head in her lap. She sits on the Byers couch, cuddled into Jonathan's side while he has his arm wrapped around her and she's petting his dog. She revels in how nice and comfortable and cozy it feels.

Later he walks her to her car.

"This was really nice."

"Yes."

"I love your family."

"They love you... Chester most of all maybe..."

She smiles and bumps his hip with hers.

"This has been the first good day of my life since..."

"Yeah... it's been the best day of my life."

She halts her step at that. She knows Jonathan, granted she's only really known him well for a limited time but that time has made her know him really really well. Well enough to know he chooses his words carefully and doesn't just say stuff like that without really meaning it. She thinks about what he said and realizes something.

"It's been the best day of my life too."

It really has been. She leans in and kisses him again.

He opens the car door for her which makes her blush. She has to kiss him again.

"Hey so... pick me up for school tomorrow?"

"Sure."

He kisses her again. The world feels alright.